



DFIRS NEWS

Delaware Fire Incident Reporting System

Volume 3, Issue 4

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USFA's view on NFIRS & HIPAA

The below e-mail was distributed to all state Program Managers on April 11, 2003 by Bradley S. Pabody at FEMA/USFA National Fire Data Center:

"Several members have asked whether the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA), Public Law 104-191 would prevent the USFA and participating states from collecting certain information on NFIRS incident and casualty forms.

Section 1178 of HIPAA provides that:

Nothing in this part shall be construed to invalidate or limit the authority, power, or procedures established under any law providing for the reporting of disease or injury

...public health surveillance, or public health investigation or intervention.

It is USFA's view that 49 U.S.C. 2208, which provides for the collection of data about, among other things, the "number of injuries and deaths resulting from fires, including the maximum available information on the specific causes and nature of such injuries and deaths, and information on property losses," constitutes a law providing for reporting of disease or injury (and arguably public health surveillance, investigation and intervention) under Section 1178 of HIPAA. Consequently, we believe that provision of this information to NFIRS would not be a violation of HIPAA and will continue to collect the existing data elements..."

If you have any further questions regarding HIPAA and incident reporting please contact Crystal Beach.

Federal Software Security Information

This information only affects departments using the free Federal Software to enter incident reports. In the last newsletter, you were informed that any on-line user who has not signed into the system for at least 60 days will have their account "deactivated." To have your account "activated" simply contact Program Manager, Crystal Beach for assistance. The important thing to remember is

once your account has been "activated" you must sign in prior to the next 0430. For example, if you contact Crystal to "reactivate" your account on Friday at 1400 you must sign on by 0430 Saturday.

Coding Questions

A recent question received at the SFMO is, **"How do I record a carbon monoxide incident when gas meters show negative result?"**

Answer:

- Record the incident as incident type 746 – Carbon monoxide detector activation, no CO.

Other recently submitted coding questions:

"For a vehicle accident do I use code 322 or 463?"

Answer:

If there are injuries record the incident as incident type 322 – Motor vehicle accident with injuries. Includes collision with other vehicle, fixed objects, or loss of control resulting in leaving the roadway. However, if the vehicle accident involves extricating individuals the incident type is code 352 – Extrication of victim(s) from vehicle. Includes rescues from vehicles hanging off a bridge or cliff.

If there is only property damage record the incident type 463 – Vehicle accident, general cleanup. Fire department is dispatched after the accident to clear away debris.

"How do I record dispatched for a gas order but we were unable to identify source upon arrival?"

Answer:

Record the incident as incident type 671 – Hazardous material release investigation with no hazardous condition found. Included is odor of gas, no leak/gas found.

DFIRS Participation Goal Achieved

The SFMO goal of 100% participation has been

2003 Assistance to Firefighters Grant Application Preliminary Data

USFA Release Date: April 29, 2003

WASHINGTON DC - The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the United State Fire Administration (USFA) have received approximately 19,950 applications for the 2003 Assistance to Firefighters Grant program. The total request of all departments, including the non-federal share, is around \$2.5 billion. For the 2003 program, Congress appropriated, and President Bush signed into law, \$750 million in direct assistance in support of the nation's firefighters and the services they deliver.

"Through President Bush's leadership, there is twice as much money this year to help firefighters respond to all types of emergencies-from the common to the complex," said Michael D. Brown, Under Secretary of Homeland Security for Emergency Preparedness and Response. "Making sure firefighters have the proper equipment, resources, training and community support to safely respond to emergencies is critical to helping us meet our mission to better secure the homeland."

achieved. Our thanks go out to everyone who has helped make this possible. The utilization of accurate and timely DFIRS data will provide our great state with much needed information.

Congratulations!

All departments are active electronic DFIRS participants:

- 57. Cranston Heights Fire Co
- 58. Minquadale Fire Co#1 Inc
- 59. Talleyville Fire Co
- 60. Wilmington Manor Vol Fire Co
- 61. Christiana Fire Co

For more information regarding the Delaware Fire Incident Reporting System (DFIRS), please contact Crystal Beach at 302-739-5665 or crystal.beach@state.de.us

PLEASE POST FOR ALL DEPARTMENT MEMBERS